

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04

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SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05 OMB-01 /086 W

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R 020103Z JUN 77

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8190

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY RANGOON

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMCONSUL UDORN

CINCPAC

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 VIENTIANE 0890

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: XGDS-4

TAGS: PFOR EAID LA MY TH BM ID US

SUBJECT: MALAYSIAN FOREIGN MINISTER'S VISIT TO SRV AND LPDR

INTRODUCTION: A MALAYSIAN DIPLOMAT PROVIDED THE FOLLOWING BACKGROUND ON THE RECENT LAO-MALAYSIAN AND VIETNAMESE-MALAYSIAN TALKS DURING THE VISIT OF THE DELEGATION LED BY MALAYSIAN FOREIGN MINISTER RITHAUDDEEN TO HANOI AND VIENTIANE, MAY 22 TO 27, 1977.

1. THE MALAYSIAN DELEGATION HELD TWO ROUNDS OF TALKS WITH THE LAO SIDE. DURING THE FIRST ROUND THE MALAYSIANS INTRODUCED AS TALKING POINTS "THREE AREAS OF DIFFERENCE": 1) LAO "MEDIA DIPLOMACY" (LAO PRESS ATTACKS ON MALAYSIA ESPECIALLY REGARDING THE JOINT
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THAI-MALAYSIAN BORDER OPERATIONS); 2) DIFFERENCE REGARDING THE MALAYSIAN PROPOSAL FOR A "ZONE OF PEACE, FREEDOM AND NEUTRALITY"; AND 3) THE NATURE AND PURPOSE OF ASEAN.

2. THE LAO REPORTEDLY RESPONDED THAT THESE AREAS WOULD BE STUDIED AND THEN DISCUSSED IN THE SECOND

SCHEDULED ROUND OF TALKS. FOR THEIR PART, THE LAO REVIEWED THE PROBLEMS FACING THE LPDR, EMPHASIZING PROBLEMS IN LAO-THAI RELATIONS. THE LAO ALSO DISCUSSED RELATIONS WITH THE U.S., REPORTEDLY SAYING THAT THE WOOKCOCK COMMISSION HAD GIVEN THEM ASSURANCES THAT THE U.S. WOULD GIVE AID TO THE LPDR THROUGH MULTILATERAL CHANNELS AND THAT THE U.S. WOULD USE ITS INFLUENCE TO ENCOURAGE THAILAND TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH THE LPDR.

3. DURING THE SECOND ROUND OF TALKS, THE LAO DID NOT REFER TO THE "AREAS OF DIFFERENCE" RAISED BY THE MALAYSIANS EARLIER BUT INSTEAD RETURNED TO ELABORATION OF PROBLEMS IN LAO-THAI RELATIONS.

4. FOREIGN MINISTER RITHAUDDEEN REPORTEDLY EXPRESSED THE OPINION TO HIS KMALAYSIAN COLLEAGUES THAT SOME OF THE LAO CHARGES AGAINST THE THAI APPEARED LEGITIMATE AND THAT HE HAD DISCUSSED LAO THI RELATIONS WITH WONG PHONNIKON THAI MFA, UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE, WHO HAD RESPONDED THAT WHILE HE RECOGNIZED THAT THE LAO HONESTLY SOUGHT BETTER RELATIONS WITH THAILAND THERE WAS NOTHING HE COULD DO BECAUSE OF THE POWER AND INFLUENCE OF THE THAI MILITARY AND BORDER GOVERNORS.

5. THE MALAYSIAN AMBASSADOR TO THE LPDR REPORTEDLY EXPRESSED THE VIEW TO HIS MALAYSIAN COLLEAGUES THAT LAOS AND VIETNAM WERE MAINTAINING THE POSITION THAT IMPROVEMENT IN RELATIONS BETWEEN VIETNAM/LAOS AND ASEAN MEMBER STATES WAS DEPENDENT UPON AN IMPROVEMENT IN
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RELATIONS BETWEEN THAILAND AND VIETNAM/LAOS.

6. THE DIPLOMAT SAID THAT THE LAO ATTEMPTED TO EVADE RATHER THAN ACCEPT AN INVITATION FOR LAO FOREIGN MINISTER PHOUNE SIPRASEUTH TO VISIT MALAYSIA, CLAIMING THAT HE WAS IN POOR HEALTH AND OFFERING INSTEAD TO SEND A HIGH-RANKING DELEGATION. THE MALAYSIANS REPORTEDLY RESPONDED THAT IT WAS TO BE "PHOUNE OR NO ONE", AT WHICH POINT THE LAO AGREED IN PRINCIPLE TO A PHOUNE VISIT. THE MALAYSIANS ALSO INVITED PRIME MINISTER KAYSONE TO VISIT MALAYSIA AND THE KLAO AGREED TO CONSIDER THE PROPOSAL.

7. THE MALAYSIAN CHARGE D'AFFAIRES TOLD EMBOFF MAY 25 THAT THE LAO HAD AGREED TO A JOINT COMMUNIQUE, THE TERMS OF WHICH WERE TO BE WORKED OUT AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE VISIT. EMBOFF WAS TOLD JUNE 1 THAT THE VIETNAMESE CHARGE IN VIENTIANE EXPLAINED TO THE MALAYSIAN CHARGE WHY THERE WOULD IN FACT BE NO JOINT COMMUNIQUE

IN VIENTIANE BY NOTING THAT THERE HAD BEEN NO JOINT COMMUNIQUE IN HANOI.

8. THE MALAYSIANS HAD BEEN LED TO BELIEVE THAT THE DELEGATION WOULD CALL UPON PRESIDENT SOUPHANOUVONG, BUT THE MEETING DID NOT MATERIALIZE. WHEN QUESTIONED ABOUT THIS THE LAO CHIEF OF PROTOCOL REPORTEDLY EXPLAINED THAT THE LAO PRESIDENT FREQUENTLY "TAKES OFF WITHOUT TELLING US WHEN AND WHERE HE IS GOING."

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9. IN HANOI THE MALAYSIANS REPORTEDLY FORCEFULLY VOINCE THEIR CONCERN OVER THE INSURGENCY IN MALAYSIA, NOTING THAT IT WAS "NOT INDIGENOUS." THE VIETNAMESE REPORTEDLY MADE NO COMMENTS REGARDING THE INSURGENCY IN MALAYSIA, BUT COMPLAINED ABOUT THAI INABILITY TO "ADJUST" TO THE "NEW SITUATION IN SOUTHEAST ASIA."

10. THE MALAYSIAN DIPLOMAT SAID THAT MALAYSIA WILL BE PROVIDING VIETNAM WITH 70,000 PALM OIL SEEDLINGS AND WILL BE SENDING MALAYSIAN RUBBER INDUSTRY EXPERTS TO

AID VIETNAM IN DEVELOPMENT OF TTS NATURAL RUBBER INDUSTRY. HE SAID THAT THE INDONESIANS MIGHT CONSIDER ASSISTANCE TO VIETNAM IN THE FIELD OF RUBBER TO BE "STRATEGIC AID" WHICH THEY HAVE LOBBIED AGAINST VIS-A-VIS LAOS AND VIETNAM, AMONG THEIR FELLOW ASEAN STATES.
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(HE SAID THAT THE INDONESIANS HAD REJECTED A LAO REQUEST FOR ASPHALT ON THE BASIS THAT THIS WOULD CONSTITUTE "STRATEGIC AID".)

11. THE MALAYSIAN AND BURMESE CHARGES TOLD EMBOFF SEPARATELY IN APRIL THAT THE VIETNAMESE CHARGE IN VIENTIANE HAD SOUGHT THEIR SYMPATHY AND UNDERSTANDING REGARDING LAO AND VIETNAMESE PROBLEMS WITH THAILAND, COMMENTING TO BOTH: "WHY IS IT THAT THAILAND HAS BORDER PROBLEMS WITH ALL OF HER NEIGHBORS?"

12. COMMENT: THE LAO APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN ANXIOUS TO PUT THE BEST POSSIBLE FACE ON THEIR TALKS WITH THE MALAYSIANS, AVOIDING THE CONTENTIOUS MALAYSIAN TALKING POINTS AND ACCORDING THE DELEGATION CORDIAL TREATMENT. THIS INTENT COUPLED WITH LAO AND VIETNAMESE EFFORTS TO GAIN A SYMPATHETIC EAR REGARDING THEIR PROBLEMS WITH THAILAND MAY IN FACT AMOUNT TO AN EFFORT TO ENCOURAGE PRESSURE ON THE THAI FROM THE OTHER ASEAN STATES AND FROM OTHER SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS (REF PARA 11).
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